

Braised Short Rib Ragu

Swick

Serves 1 | Active Time: 40 minutes | Total Time: 6 hours

Step 1: Searing the Ribs

- 4 lb short ribs, bone-in (English style)
- kosher salt (to taste)
- freshly ground black pepper (to taste)
- 1 to 2 tbsp grapeseed or veg oil

Liberally season the ribs with the salt and pepper. Then heat a bit of the oil in a large (5 or 6-quart) Dutch oven.

Next add half of the ribs and brown on each side, about 3 minutes per side. Transfer the ribs to a platter and set aside.

Continue with this process until all of the ribs are nicely browned. Transfer them all to the platter and set aside.

Preheat the oven to at least 200°F or 95C. You can cook these at a higher temperature to speed up the cooking process, but slower and lower is the way to go if you can afford the time. If short on time, set the oven to 375°F.

Step 2: Building the Sauce

- 5 oz pancetta
- 2 medium onions
- 2 stalks celery
- 2 carrots
- 2 cups button mushrooms
- 6 cloves garlic
- 1 tbsp kosher salt
- 1/4 tsp freshly ground black pepper
- 3 tbsp tomato paste
- 1 tbsp sugar
- 1/8 tsp crushed chili flakes
- 1/2 tsp fennel seeds
- 2 pinches ground cinnamon
- 3 tbsp sun-dried tomatoes (optional)
- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 1/2 cup red wine (can substitute with white wine or vermouth)
- 42 oz canned whole tomatoes

To start prepare your mise en place. Dice the pancetta and then roughly dice the onions, celery, carrots and mushrooms. Emincé the garlic and gather the rest of your ingredients.

To begin making the sauce, drain any excess fat from the pot if there is any. Add the pancetta and cook, stirring often, until the pancetta has rendered some of its fat but is barely crisp. This will take only about 4 minutes.

Next, add the onion, celery, carrots and mushrooms and sauté for about 4 minutes. Add the garlic and season with the salt and pepper. Cook this for about 3 to 5 minutes or until softened. Add the tomato paste, sugar and red pepper flakes, cinnamon, fennel seeds, and sundried tomatoes and cook for another 2 minutes or so.

Next, deglaze with the balsamic vinegar and wine (or vermouth). Stir to scrape up any browned bits on the bottom of the pot. Add the tomatoes and their juices and bring to a boil. Reduce to a simmer. Return the ribs and any juices back to the pot and nestle them into the sauce (meat side down).

Step 3: Cooking the Ribs

Cook the ribs for about 3 to 5 hours or until fork tender. The time it takes to cook the ribs will depend on how hot you set the oven. If cooking at 375°F then it should only take about 2 to 3 hrs.

See the drill-down on “Oven Temperatures for Combination Cooking” for more information.

Step 4: Finishing the Ragu

To make the ragu, use tongs or slotted spoon to transfer the ribs to a platter. Let cool slightly – just long enough until you can handle them.

Alternatively, you could cool the entire dish and then chill in the refrigerator over night. The next day, skim any fat from the surface before proceeding.

If making the same day, skim any fat from the surface and then bring the sauce to a simmer. If the sauce seems watery, increase the heat to medium-high and simmer to reduce and thicken it a bit. Now check for seasoning.

In the meantime, once the beef has cooled a bit, remove the meat from the bones. Try to keep the meat in large pieces, if possible. Using a small paring knife, remove any bits of connective tissue that is left on the meat. Now break up the meat into large, bite-size chunks or strips and return the meat to the sauce. Keep warm until ready to serve.

Like most braised dishes, this dish is even better if made the day before.

Step 5: Serving the Dish

- 1 lb rigatoni pasta (or pasta of choice)
- salt (1 tsp per L/qt of water)
- extra-virgin olive oil (to taste)
- Parmigiano-Reggiano (to taste)

To cook the pasta, bring a pot of cold water to a boil. Add the salt and stir. Add the pasta and stir as it comes back up to a boil. Cook the pasta according to the package. Once the pasta is just past the al dente stage, reserve one cup of the cooking liquid and then drain the pasta.

Toss the pasta with a bit of extra-virgin olive oil and bit of grated Parmigiano-Reggiano. Top with some of the braised beef and enjoy!